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## STAMPS.

AMONG the latest acts of the late Postmaster-general, Mr Fawcett, was the appointment of a Committee to report upon the designs, &c., of the series of postage-stamps which were issued to the public in the early part of 1884. It is understood that Mr Fawcett was induced to take this step in consequence of the complaints he received from post-office officials and from members of the general public as to the great similarity existing between the stamps of values running from one penny to one shilling; which, as a consequence, involved considerable trouble, and at times loss of money. The outcome of the labours of this Committee will be looked for with interest.

In recent years, the collection of revenue by means of impressed and adhesive stamps has increased to an enormous extent; for now, not only are stamps employed for the purpose of postage and inland revenue, but a large variety of fees—a class of receipt which in the budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer falls under the head of 'Miscellaneous'—are also recovered through the same channel. Thus, for instance, charges in connection with proceedings in the Courts of Justice have for the past few years been collected by means of impressed and adhesive stamps. If a youth desires to undergo an examination before the Civil Service Commissioners, with a view to entrance into the Army, Navy, or Civil Service, he must, as a first step, provide himself with an adhesive stamp. If a promoter seeks to register his Company with the Registrar of Joint-stock Companies at Somerset House, the duty chargeable upon the memorandum and articles of association has to be denoted by stamps. So, again, if an inventor wishes to take advantage of the patent laws for the protection of his invention, the different documents involved must bear impressed stamps. There are sundry other sources of national income, and of charges not falling exactly within that category—such as petty sessions and dog license

stamps in Ireland—similarly dealt with. And it will be found, on referring to the return of receipts paid into the Exchequer in respect of the financial year 1883-4, that, out of a total revenue of some eighty-seven million pounds, stamps of all kinds figure for about one-fourth of the whole amount—some twelve millions and a half being accounted for by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and more than nine millions by the Postmaster-general.

Let us now first see how impressed stamps are provided and dealt with. We find, then, that, although arrangements are made by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for stamping executed documents, such as leases, &c., at Edinburgh, Dublin, and Manchester respectively, the bulk of the business really centres in the Stamping Department at Somerset House. The rooms principally used for stamping purposes are situated in the upper basement of this large building; and here each day from nine A.M. to four P.M. is to be heard the constant din of machinery, with the thud of the die as it strikes the parchment or paper that is being impressed with a stamp. A considerable number of men and boys are employed upon this work, supervised by a body of superintendents and superior officers well acquainted with the technicalities and machinery connected with the stamping processes. In one room may be seen boys rapidly impressing stamps of the value of one penny each upon scores of books of forms of bankers' cheques. Owing to the ingenuity of the machines employed—the invention of a revenue official—as many as one hundred and forty of these forms can be impressed in the space of a minute. In another, will be found a careful stamper deliberately, but at the same time rapidly, impressing a probate affidavit with some two or three stamps which represent many thousands of pounds, that have just been paid up-stairs by way of duty upon the personal estate of a deceased millionaire. The duty that fell to the revenue in the case of a recently deceased nobleman, once a prominent figure in financial circles, reached, we believe, more than

sixty thousand pounds; and this amount, we understand, was denoted by some seven or eight stamps. Again, in a third room, patent-medicine stamps—which, as most persons know, are printed in two colours—are shown to the visitor being rapidly struck off in a single operation by means of an ingenious machine, the invention of the late Sir William Congreve. This is effected under a system of working double plates which fit exactly one into the other, and so arranged that, as the machine is rotated, the different colours are left on the paper with the greatest nicety.

There are a vast number of different dies for impressing stamps used in the stamping-room. All these are of hardened steel, and are the manufacture of Messrs De La Rue & Co., of Bunhill Row, London. Dr Warren De La Rue, F.R.S., late senior partner of this firm, holds the appointment of engraver of dies to the Inland Revenue Department; and the present senior partner, Mr Warren W. De La Rue, that of deputy-engraver. The facial values of the dies range from one penny to eleven thousand two hundred and fifty pounds; and, as may be supposed, every impression taken is closely scrutinised and duly recorded, by way of check and counter-check. Formerly, impressed stamps were uncoloured; but now, by an ingenious arrangement—the invention of some revenue officials—they are all done in colour.

The duty on the bulk of the executed documents and on the blank paper and parchments impressed in the stamping-rooms, is paid either direct to the Receiver-general of Inland Revenue, or to the various distributors throughout the country who act through the Controller of Stamps; but some years since, more fully to meet the convenience of the public, some novel arrangements for expediting the stamping of executed documents were made, under which the duty could be paid direct over the counter to the mechanical officers employed under the Inspector of stamping. Machines were set up in a large room on the ground floor of the Inland Revenue Office, which recorded their own work, and thus dispensed with the necessity for clerical checks upon the receipt of money for stamping. By this means, where the value of the stamps does not exceed ten pounds, a document can now be stamped at once in the room referred to in the presence of the person presenting it. The machines—which, it is said, afford perfect safety to the revenue—are also used at the branch office of the Controller of Stamps in the Royal Courts of Justice, where they are employed for impressing judicature and other stamps.

We turn now to adhesive stamps, the manufacture of all of which vests by law in the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, who are also held responsible for all necessary safeguards being taken to secure the state against fraud in the direction of imitation, cleaning-out ink-cancellation, and so on. These securities are necessarily sought for, as against forgery, in the character of the paper and the excellence of the design; and, as against cleaning, in the peculiarly special quality of the inks with which the stamps are printed. Some eighteen hundred millions of adhesive stamps are issued yearly from the office of the Controller of Stamps. These range in

value from a halfpenny to twenty pounds—covering postage and inland revenue from a halfpenny to two shillings and sixpence; postage proper from five shillings to five pounds; inland revenue proper (such as foreign bills, sea policy stamps, &c.) from one penny to ten pounds; and fees (such as judicature, &c.) from one penny to twenty pounds. The penny stamp takes the first place among the numbers issued. Of these, as many as thirteen hundred millions and a half were despatched from Somerset House in the course of a recent twelve months. It will be of interest to see how all these stamps are brought into existence; and we propose now, therefore, to give a sketch of the means by which this is arrived at.

First, then, it will be found that all adhesive stamps are printed upon paper which is water-marked with one or other of the five patterns now employed—namely, Crown, Orb, V.R., Anchor, and Ace. The unified stamps up to one shilling take up the bulk of the paper. This particular lot of paper is marked with crowns, and each sheet is so arranged that one crown shall appear in each space intended to be covered by a stamp. The water-marks are produced by affixing pieces of thin brass, technically styled 'bits,' fashioned in the required design, on the light wire cylinder, or dandy-roll, as it is called, under which, as it travels along the machinery, the paper passes just as it ceases to be pulp; and so, by means of compression where the 'bits' stand out, a pattern is shaped. It does not, however, fall within the scope of this article to describe the process of paper-making; it is sufficient to mention that all the paper used for English government stamps is made by Messrs R. D. Turner & Co. of Roughway Mill, near Tunbridge, Kent, under contract with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. The mill is entirely confined to the manufacture of this particular paper, as ordered by the Commissioners, and to such other water-marked paper as is required by the government of India and by some of the colonies for their stamps. The rags used are necessarily of an especially fine quality, and the water employed is most pure. The mill is under the constant close supervision of a body of officers belonging to the department of the Controller of Stamps; and by these officers, every operation conducted therein is strictly watched. The dandy-rolls, with the exception of the one that may be in actual use, are always kept under revenue lock. Every sheet of paper that passes from the machine is counted and scrutinised by the revenue officer; and, if the least flaw be detected, is at once rejected. When finished, the paper is in due course despatched in a locked van to the Controller of Stamps at Somerset House. Here, the van is unlocked by a responsible officer. Every sheet is again examined and counted, and then stored away in a secure repository.

Now we come to the printing of the sheets with stamps. First, it should be mentioned that from 1840—the date of the introduction of the penny postage—down to 1879, the penny postage-stamp and, subsequently, the twopenny, one-half-penny, and three-halfpenny stamps were printed under the recess or line-engraved process. From 1855, however, all the higher values of postage-stamps had been printed by the surface system,

which had already for some time been adopted for the fiscal stamps needed by the Inland Revenue Board. And this latter system proving so satisfactory, it was determined, in 1879, when the then existing contract for the recess-printed stamps lapsed, to have all classes of stamps printed under the surface process. The tender of Messrs De La Rue was accepted, who thereupon entered into a contract with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for a term of years. We will suppose, then, that a quantity of penny unified stamps are required. The first step is for the Commissioners to issue their warrant for the creation of the stamps. Upon this, the Controller of Stamps furnishes Messrs De La Rue with the number of crown water-marked sheets needed; and he will require that firm to give a strict account of every one of these, either in the form of perfect sheets of stamps or by way of spoilage.

We now follow the water-marked paper to Bunhill Row; and being allowed, by the courtesy of Messrs De La Rue, to inspect their works, a permission given to but a privileged few—for visitors are rarely admitted—we will attempt to give our readers some idea of what we saw there in relation to the manufacture of adhesive stamps, postcards, newspaper wrappers, postage envelopes, and value-paper generally.

There are no fewer than six large blocks of buildings, separated from one another by considerable distances. All these buildings are in telephonic communication, and messages are being sent all day long from one building to the other. There is also a telephone in connection with the office of the Controller of Stamps, with whom the firm are in constant communication on the numerous questions relating to stamps to be, or in the process of being, manufactured. So much are the telephones used, that in each building a clerk is stationed whose sole duty it is to receive and transmit messages. Seeing to what an extent these telephones are now used, it is difficult to understand how the work could have been previously carried on without them. It is true that some of the works had been connected by telegraph, but the telegraphic instrument is slow in manipulation as compared with the telephone. From each block, too, a wire proceeds to the nearest fire brigade station, so that in case of an alarm of fire the firemen could be called without a moment's delay. The fire instruments are tested two or three times a day and during the night, so as to insure their being always in proper order. Needless to say that there is a special service of hydrants laid throughout the various buildings, communicating with large reservoirs or tanks at the top of the works; and there is, moreover, a powerful stationary steam fire-engine, which is capable of throwing as much water as three or four of the ordinary brigade engines, and to a much greater height. At night, watchmen patrol the inside of the buildings, and a systematic record is kept of their rounds by means of Julius Sach's patent electric tell-tale clock. Under this tell-tale system, the times at which the watchman visits the various rooms are recorded by his touching an electric tapper in each room. The readings from each clock are taken daily; and if the watchman neglects his duty, either by omitting any of his rounds or by being late upon them, the matter

is brought under the notice of the heads of the firm. These are the points which were most forcibly impressed upon us as we walked through the administrative department, in which a large number of clerks are employed. We cannot, however, attempt to explain, nor would it be of interest to the general reader were we to do so, the administrative part of the business. We proceed, then, to the engraving room, where we find a large number of machines actively engaged in engraving the elaborate designs which are imparted to stamps, bank-notes, and such-like articles. In this room there is a great variety of machinery of the most delicate nature; and it is most impressive to watch the working of these machines, which are capable of executing work of such a character as it would, we understand, be impossible to reproduce without the assistance of like machinery—a fact which imparts an immense security to any stamp or bank-note upon which the work may be printed. We are struck by the absence of gas-burners; and on inquiry, we find that so delicate is the nature of the machinery, that it would be impossible to employ gas, inasmuch as the fumes from it would destroy the machines. When, then, the daylight fails, recourse is had to colza-oil lamps.

We pass from this room through a series of workshops in which a number of interesting operations are being conducted, not, however, connected with stamps, into the room in which the English stamps, postcards, &c., are being printed. The transition from the quiet engraving studio to this bustling scene of activity is most striking. In place of the repose of the one, with its delicate and sensitive machinery, we have here an enormous room filled with the most powerful and massive machinery, working at a very high speed; and the noise that is thereby generated, and the air of activity and bustle that surrounds one, is for the moment quite bewildering. After we have got somewhat accustomed to the scene, we notice in various positions in the room the desks of the officers of the Board of Inland Revenue whose duty it is to watch all the operations and to control every sheet of paper that is printed. Passing on, we are taken to the different classes of machine; and after we have for some time watched the rapidity and exactness with which the sheets of paper are taken up, printed, and then ejected by powerful machines, and having subsequently looked at the beautiful manner in which the embossed stamp is imparted to the postage envelopes, we are, by the courtesy of the principal Inland Revenue officer, permitted to inspect one of the printing-plates used for printing adhesive stamps. This is of a bright metal, and contains as many stamp-pieces as there are to be stamps upon the sheet. Every stamp resembles exactly the other, whilst they are all absolute fac-similes of the die from which the plate was made. This die we are allowed to handle. It consists of a block of steel upon which all the work has been engraved with infinite elaboration and pains. Each die, it seems, takes several months to complete; and even then, there is a possibility of the whole of the work being rendered useless by its cracking in the hardening process. The die is to this end made red hot, and then plunged into a cold solution, so that it may be very suddenly chilled. The

tension that takes place often results in the breaking of the die into fragments. Returning to the plate, it is difficult to realise why the machines used for taking impressions from it should be so large and powerful. On inquiry, we are told that, unless the sheet of paper to be printed is pressed to the plate with enormous pressure, really good printing cannot be obtained. The force used to impart the requisite pressure is so very great as sometimes to cause massive parts of the machine, made of solid iron, to crack in two with a loud report, as of a cannon being fired. The horse-power required to drive the machinery in this printing-room is very large, as each one of the numerous machines needs considerable force.

Proceeding now to the room in which the gum for the adhesive stamps and newspaper wrappers is made, we observe many tons of the finest gum carefully stacked away, and we are shown a series of brightly polished copper vessels and apparatus employed in the preparation of the gum. This is pumped up by a special apparatus into the gumming-rooms, where it is applied by a large staff of girls in the most delicate manner to the backs of the stamps and to the end of the newspaper wrappers. The rooms in which this work is conducted are of immense area. This is a necessity, inasmuch as, after the sheets have been gummed, they have to be laid out in large racks to dry. The process of drying is effected by hot and dry air being blown into the several rooms by large fans working at a great velocity, and by the damp air being then drawn away up large air-shafts, varying in height from eighty to one hundred and twenty feet.

The high polish that is imparted to the adhesive stamps is given by a system of glazing which is carried out by powerful and beautiful machinery. The process is an interesting one to watch, although, when one is told that if by any chance a part of a man's dress were to get between the rollers of any of the machines, he might be drawn in and killed, one feels some hesitation in standing near.

The perforation of the stamps is carried on in a separate room. The machines that effect this are here pulsating up and down with great rapidity, and punching out the little discs of paper which have to be removed in order to leave the perforation in the sheets. The noise attending the operation is considerable. Formerly, this work was done in the basement of Somerset House; but so much inconvenience was felt by the officials in the rooms above from the overpowering thudding of the machines, that it became necessary to remove them.

Every sheet of stamps, and every single postcard, newspaper wrapper, and stamped envelope is most carefully examined, and any defective one is rejected. The cutting of the postcards and newspaper wrappers is effected by special machinery of a very complicated nature, which it would be difficult to describe within the limits of our space; whilst the counting, boarding, and packing are conducted by a very large number of hands. Nothing can impress one more with the magnitude of the postal and revenue business of this country than a visit to this establishment, where one sees an army of men, women, and children engaged all day long throughout the

year in producing the stamps, &c., required by the departments concerned. Standing in the printing-room, one can hardly realise that, at every impression of the numerous machines, a sheet of stamps or newspaper wrappers has been produced; whilst, when one passes into the various other rooms and sees the number of people employed in dealing, with great rapidity, with all these articles in their several stages towards completion, the impression is even more striking. We have only visited the rooms in which the work for the English government is conducted. Separate departments of nearly the same extent are devoted to work for the Indian, colonial, and other governments. Taking, then, postage-stamps alone, one is impressed with the vastness of correspondence developed in recent years throughout the world, and which is no doubt largely due to the low rates now charged—a new departure of which this country was the pioneer.

Whilst walking through the various rooms we noticed trucks of work passing hither and thither, and lifts moving up and down from one floor to another, pointing to a vast consumption of manual labour and steam-power. The source of this last we visited towards the end of our inspection, and found enormous boilers and steam-engines in full activity; whilst in the basement of one of the works we saw an engineer's shop fitted with all the most modern engineering appliances, in which—after being designed and modelled in another department—all the machinery that is used in the business is made.

Having now, with much interest, completed our inspection of the various works in which stamping and cognate operations are carried on, we are conducted to the private offices of the firm. Here—and we only mention it as pointing to the complete organisation that must reign throughout the beehive in the centre of which we stand—we find the partners have leisure to answer and to discuss the numerous questions we put; and amongst other things, we are astonished to learn that, although we have already done a good day's work, we have only visited about one-tenth of the firm's works. In the parts not seen by us are carried on all their vast trading business, as distinguished from that done for government. Next to the magnitude of the works, which are most certainly the largest of their description in the world, the point which most struck us was the cleanliness and order that reigned everywhere amidst so much bustle and activity; and—after seeing all that we witnessed, we were not surprised to learn that the loss of a sheet of stamps is practically unknown.

The development of this gigantic business has no doubt been the work of many men and of many minds; and it is no less surprising than interesting to find that the third generation of the family, in which it is now vested, in no way lack either the fertility of resource or the keen spirit of enterprise that must have been possessed by their predecessors so as to found and successfully promote a trading concern of such magnitude.

Returning now for a moment to Somerset House, we learn that the stock of stamps always held by the Controller of Stamps represents a money value of some five or six millions of



pounds sterling; and this stock, which is being constantly replenished by consignments from Messrs De La Rue as they complete the sheets of stamps in course of manufacture, is daily depleted by issues to the various postmasters and distributors of stamps throughout the United Kingdom. The stamps in the custody of the Controller are always stored away in separate repositories at a safe distance from each other, so that, in case of fire and a possible destruction of one portion of Somerset House, no inconvenience should arise. Some idea of the volume of business of the particular class transacted in the office of the Controller, and of the multitude of stamps, postcards, &c., that are despatched therefrom, may be formed when it is known that, on an ordinary day, the weight of the stamp postbags leaving Somerset House is measured by some three or four tons; whilst at certain seasons, such as Christmas and other exceptional periods of the year, the weight removed on a day by the Post-office vans reaches as much as eight tons, representing a money value of more than one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. From year to year, there has been a steady increase in these quantities.

## A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF.

### CHAPTER XIII.

'COME out for a walk, papa,' Constance said.

'What! in the heat of the day? You think you are in England.'

'No, indeed. I wish I did—at least, that is not what I mean. But I wish you did not think it necessary to stay in a place like this. Why should you shut yourself out from the world? You are very clever, papa.'

'Who told you so? You cannot have found that out by your own unassisted judgment.'

'A great many people have told me. I have always known. You seem to have made a mystery about us, but we never made any mystery about you; for one thing, of course, we couldn't; for everybody knew. But if you chose to go back to England!'

'I shall never go back to England.'

'Oh,' said Constance with a laugh, 'never is a long day.'

'So long a day, that it is a pity you should link your fortunes to mine, my dear. Frances has been brought up to it; but your case is quite different; and you see even she catches at the first opportunity of getting away.'

'You are scarcely just to Frances,' said Constance with her usual calm. 'You might have said the same thing of me. I took the first opportunity also. To know that one has a father, whom one never remembers to have seen, is very exciting to the imagination; and just in so much as one has been disappointed in the parent one knows, one expects to find perfection in the parent one has never seen. Anything that you don't know is better than everything you do know,' she added with the air of a philosopher.

'I am afraid, in that case, acquaintance has been fatal to your ideal.'

'Not exactly,' she said. 'Of course, you are quite different from what I supposed. But I

think we might get on well enough, if you please.—Do come out. If we keep in the shade, it is not really very hot. It is often hotter in London where nobody thinks of staying indoors. If we are to live together, don't you think you must begin by giving in to me a little, papa?'

'Not to the extent of getting a sun-stroke.'

'In March!' she cried with a tone of mild derision. 'Let me come into the bookroom, then. You think if Frances goes, that you will never be able to get on with me.'

'My thoughts have not gone so far as that. I may have believed that a young lady fresh from all the gaieties of London'—

'But so tired of them; and very glad of a little novelty, however it presents itself.'

'Yes, so long as it continues novel. But the novelty of making the *spese* in a village, and looking sharply after every centesimo that is asked for an artichoke'—

'The *spese* means the daily expenses? I should not mind that. And Mariuccia is far more entertaining than an ordinary English cook. And the neighbours—well, the neighbours afford some opportunities for fun. Mrs Gaunt, is it? expects her youngest boy. And then there is Tasie.'

The name of Tasie brought a certain relaxation to the muscles of Waring's face. He gave a glance round him, to see that all the doors were closed. 'I must confide in you, Constance; though, mind, Frances must not share it. I sitting here, simply as you see me, have been supposed dangerous to Tasie's peace of mind. Is not that an excellent joke?'

'I don't see that it is a joke at all,' said Constance without even a smile. 'Why, Tasie is antediluvian. She must be nearly as old as you are. Any old gentleman might be dangerous to Tasie. Tell me something more wonderful than that.'

'Oh, that is how it appears to you?' said Waring. His laugh came to a sudden end, broken off, so to speak, in half, and an air of portentous gravity came over his face. He turned over the papers on the table before him, as with a sudden thought. 'By the way, I forgot I had something to do this afternoon,' he said. 'Before dinner, perhaps, we may take a stroll, if the sun is not so hot. But this is my working-time,' he added with a stiff smile.

Constance could not disregard so plain a hint. She rose up quickly. She had taken Frances' chair, which he had forgiven her at first; but it made another note against her now.

'What have I done?' she said to herself, raising her eyebrows, angry, and yet half amused, by her dismissal. Frances had gone to her room, too, and was not to be disturbed, as her sister had seen by the look of her face. She felt herself, as she would have said, very much 'out of it,' as she wandered round the deserted salone, looking at everything in it with a care suggested by her solitude rather than any real interest. She looked at the big high-coloured water-pots, turned into decorations, one could imagine against their will, which stood in the corners of the room, and which were Mrs Durant's present to Frances; and at the blue Savona vases, with the names of medicines, real or imaginary, betraying their original intention; and all the other decorative

scraps—the little old pictures, the pieces of needle-work and brocade. They were pretty when she looked at them, though she had not perceived their beauty at the first glance. There were more decorations of the same description in the ante-room, which gave her a little additional occupation; and then she strolled into the loggia and threw herself into the long chair. She had a book, one of the novels she had bought on the journey. But Constance was not accustomed to much reading. She got through a chapter or two; and then she looked round upon the view and mused a little, and then returned to her novel. The second time she threw it down and went back to the drawing-room, and had another look at the Savona pots. She had thought how well they would look on a certain shelf at 'home.' And then she stopped and took herself to task. What did she mean by home? This was home. She was going to live here; it was to be her place in the world. What she had to do was to think of the decorations here, and whether she could add to them, not of vacant corners in another place. Finally, she returned again to the loggia, and sat down once more rather drearily.

There had never occurred a day in her experience in which she had been so long without 'something to do.' Something to do meant something that was amusing, something to pass the time, somebody to entertain, or perhaps, if nothing else was possible, to quarrel with. To sit alone and look round her at 'the view,' to have not a creature to say a word to, and nothing to engage herself with but a book: and nothing to look forward to but this same thing repeated three hundred and sixty-five days in the year! The prospect, she thought, made Constance shiver. It could not be. She must do something to break the spell. But what was there to do? The *spese* were all made for to-day, the dinner was ordered: and she knew very little either about the *spese* or the dinner. She would have to learn, to think of new dishes, and write them down in a little book, as Frances did. Her dinners, she said to herself, must be better than those of Frances. But when was she to begin, and how was she to do it? In the meantime, she went and fetched a shawl, and while the sun blazed straight on the loggia from the south, to which it was open in front, and left only one scrap of shade in a corner scarcely enough to shelter the long chair, fell asleep there, finding that she had nothing else to do.

Frances had gone to her room with her packet of letters. She had not thought what they were, nor what had been the meaning of what her father said when he gave them to her. She took them—no, not to her own room, but to the blue room, in which there was so little comfort. Her little easy-chair, her writing-table, all the things with which she was at home, belonged to Constance now. She sat down, or rather up, in a stiff upright chair, and opened her little packet upon her bed. To her astonishment, she found that it contained letters addressed to herself, unopened. The first of them was printed in large letters, as for the eyes of a child. They were very simple, not very long, concluding invariably with one phrase: 'Dear, write to me'—*'Write to me, my darling.'* Frances read them

with her eyes full of tears, with a rising wave of passion and resentment which seemed to suffocate her. He had kept them all back. What harm could they have done? Why should she have been kept in ignorance, and made to appear like a heartless child, like a creature without sense or feeling? Half for her mother, half for herself, the girl's heart swelled with a kind of fury. She had not been ready to judge her father even after she had been aware of his sin against her. She had still accepted what he did as part of him, bidding her own mind be silent, hushing all criticism. But when she read these little letters, her passion overflowed. How dared he to ignore all her rights, to allow herself to be misrepresented, to give a false idea of her? This was the most poignant pang of all. Without being selfish, it is still impossible to feel a wrong of this kind to another so acutely as to yourself. He had deprived her of the comfort of knowing that she had a mother, of communicating with her, of retaining some hold upon that closest of natural friends. That injury she had condoned and forgiven; but when Frances saw how her father's action must have shaped the idea of herself in the mind of her mother, there was a moment in which she felt that she could not forgive him. If she had received year by year these tender letters, yet never had been moved to answer one of them, what a creature must she have been, devoid of heart or common feeling, or even good taste, that superficial grace by which the want of better things is concealed! She was more horrified by this thought than by any other discovery she could have made. She seemed to see the Frances whom her mother knew—a little ill-conditioned child; a small, petty, ungracious, unloving girl. Was this what had been thought of her? And it was all his fault—all her father's fault!

At first, she could see no excuse for him. She would not allow to herself that any love for her, or desire to retain her affection, was at the bottom of the concealment. She got a sheet of paper, and began to write with passionate vehemence, pouring forth all her heart. 'Imagine that I have never seen your dear letters till to-day—never till to-day! and what must you think of me,' she wrote. But when she had put her whole heart into it, working a miracle, and making the dull paper to glow and weep, there came a change over her thoughts. She had kept his secret till now. She had not betrayed even to Constance the ignorance in which she had been kept; and should she change her course, and betray him now?

As she came to think it over, she felt that she herself blamed her father bitterly, that he had fallen from the pedestal on which to her he had stood all her life. Yet she thought that others should be conscious of this degradation was terrible to her. When Constance spoke lightly of him, it was intolerable to Frances; and the mother of whom she knew nothing, of whom she knew only that she was her mother, a woman who had grievances of her own against him, who would be perhaps pleased, almost pleased to have proof that he had done this wrong! Frances paused with the fervour of indignation still in her heart, to consider how she should bear it, if this were so. It was all selfish, she said to

herself, growing more miserable as she fought with the conviction that whether in condemning him or covering what he had done, herself was her first thought. She had to choose now between vindicating herself at his cost, or suffering continued misconception to screen him. Which should she do? Slowly she folded up the letter she had written and put it away, not destroying, but saving it, as leaving it still possible to carry out her first intention. Then she wrote another shorter, half-fictitious letter, in which the bitterness in her heart seemed to take the form of reproach to the fate which was altering her life, and her consent to obey her mother's call was forced and sullen. But this letter was no sooner written than it was torn to pieces. What was she to do? She ended, after much thought, by destroying also her first letter, and writing as follows:

DEAR MOTHER—To see my sister and to hear that you want me, is very bewildering and astonishing to me. I am very ready to come, if, indeed, you will forgive me all that you must think so bad in me, and let me try as well as I can to please you. Indeed, I desire to do so with all my heart. I have understood very little, and I have been thoughtless, and, you will think, without any natural affection; but this is because I was so ignorant, and had nobody to tell me. Forgive me, dear mamma. I do not feel as if I dare write to you now and call you by that name. As soon as we can consider and see how it is best for me to travel, I will come. I am not clever and beautiful, like Constance; but indeed I do wish to please you with all my heart.

FRANCES.

This was all she could say. She put it up in an envelope, feeling confused with her long thinking and with all the elements of change that were about her, and took it back to the bookroom to ask for the address. She had felt that she could not approach her father with composure or speak to him of ordinary matters; but it made a little formal bridge, as it were, from one kind of intercourse to another to ask him for that address.

'Will you please tell me where mamma lives?' she said.

Waring turned round quickly to look at her. 'So you have written already?'

'O papa, can you say "already?" What kind of creature must she think I am, never to have sent a word all these years?'

He paused a moment and then said: 'You have told her, I suppose?'

'I have told her nothing except that I am ready to come whenever we can arrange how I am to travel.—Papa,' she said with one of those sudden relents which come in the way of our sternest displeasure with those we love, 'O papa!' laying her hand on his arm, 'why did you do it? I am obliged to let her think that I have been without a heart all my life—for I cannot bear it when any one blames you.'

'Frances,' he said with a response equally sudden, putting his arm round her, 'what will my life be without you? I have always trusted in you, depended on you without knowing it. Let Constance go back to her, and stay you with me.'

Frances had not been accustomed to many demonstrations of affection, and this moved her almost beyond her power of self-control. She put down her head upon her father's shoulder and cried: 'Oh, if we could only go back a week; but we can't; no, nor even half a day. Things that might have been this morning, can't be now, papa! I was very, very angry—oh, in a rage, when I read these letters. Why did you keep them from me? Why did you keep my mother from me? I wrote and told her everything; and then I tore up my letter and told her nothing. But I can never be the same again,' said the girl, shaking her head with that conviction of the unchangeableness of a first trouble which is so strong in youth. 'Now, I know what it is to be one thing and appear another; and to bear blame and suffer for what you have not deserved.'

Waring repented his appeal to his child. He repented even the sudden impulse which had induced him to make it. He withdrew his arm from her with a sudden revulsion of feeling, and a recollection that Constance was not emotional, but a young woman of the world, who would understand many things which Frances did not understand. He withdrew his arm, and said somewhat coldly: 'Show me what address you have put upon your mother's letter. You must not make any mistake in that.'

Frances dried her eyes hastily, and felt the check. She put her letter before him without a word. It was addressed to Mrs Waring, no more.

'I thought so,' he said with a laugh, which sounded harsh to the excited girl; 'and to be sure, you had no means of knowing. I told you your mother was a much more important person than I. You will see the difference between wealth and poverty, as well as between a father's sway and a mother's, when you go to Eaton Square. This is your mother's address.' He wrote it hastily on a piece of paper and pushed it towards her. Frances had received many shocks and surprises in the course of these days, but scarcely one which was more startling to her simple mind than this. The paper which her father gave her did not bear his name. It was addressed to Lady Markham, Eaton Square, London. Frances turned to him an astonished gaze. 'That is where—mamma is living?' she said.

'That is—your mother's name and address,' he answered coldly. 'I told you she was a greater personage than I.'

'But, papa—'

'You are not aware,' he said, 'that, according to the beautiful arrangements of society, a woman who makes a second marriage below her is allowed to keep her first husband's name. It is so, however. Lady Markham chose to avail herself of that privilege.—That is all, I suppose? You can send your letter without any further reference to me.'

Frances went away without a word, treading softly, with a sort of suspense of life and thought. She could not tell how she felt, or what it meant. She knew nothing about the arrangements of society. Did it mean something wrong, something that was impossible? Frances could not tell how that could be, that your father and mother should

not only live apart, but have different names. A vague horror took possession of her mind. She went back to her room again, and stared at that strange piece of paper without knowing what to make of it. Lady Markham! It was not to that personage she had written her poor little simple letter. How could she say mother to a great lady, one who was not even of the same name? She was far too ignorant to know how little importance was to be attached to this. To Frances, a name was so much. She had never been taught anything but the primitive symbols, the innocently conventional alphabet of life. This new discovery filled her with a chill horror. She took her letter out of its envelope with the intention of destroying that too, and letting silence, that silence which had reigned over her life so long, fall again and for ever between her and the mother whose very name was not hers. But as this impulse swept over her, her eye caught one of the first of the little letters which had revealed this unknown woman to her. It was written in very large letters, such as a child might read, and in little words. 'My darling, write to me; I long so for you. Your loving mother.' There was no viscountess there. Her simple mind was swept by contending impulses, like strong winds carrying her now one way, now another. And unless it should be that unknown mother herself, there was nobody in the world to whom she could turn for counsel. Her heart revolted against Constance, and her father had been vexed she could not tell how. She was incapable of betraying the secrets of the family to any one beyond its range. What was she to do?

And all this because the mother, the source of so much disturbance in her little life, was Lady Markham, and not Mrs Waring! But this, to the ignorance and simplicity of Frances, was the most incomprehensible mystery of all.

(To be continued.)

#### A TALE OF THE SEA.

WE were sitting one sunny morning on the esplanade at Weymouth, my dear old friend Colonel Ramsay and I, watching with interest the movements of an unusually large vessel at some distance from the land. Accustomed to see vessels of all sizes and builds, I knew at once that she was no mere merchantman; and for some time, as she approached little by little, and showed a lofty side and a forest of spars, both the colonel and I were inclined to think her a large ironclad, probably detached from the Channel Fleet. But as her distance lessened, and we saw that her lofty sides were painted white, and were scored along their whole length with small square ports, we knew that she was one of those great Indian troopships employed by the Admiralty for the special purpose of carrying our soldiers in safety and comfort to or from our Eastern dependency. Presently she rounded the Breakwater, headed for the anchorage in Portland, and in doing so, passed behind the Nothe Fort and out of our sight.

'Ah, my dear madam,' said the colonel, as he removed and wiped his glasses, 'they take more care of the British subaltern nowadays than they did when I joined the service. Nobody had ever heard of a troopship in those days; we just took

a passage in any vessel that was available, no matter if she was fit for the work or not; and where these ships take weeks, we used to take months, and regard it as a matter of course.'

'Yes,' said I; 'I have often read of difficulties, and even dangers, incurred by our troops on their Indian voyage; but I used to think them probably greatly exaggerated.'

'Exaggerated, madam!' quoth the colonel hotly. 'Say, rather, not a tenth part was told. I once, on my first voyage, encountered perhaps the most bloodthirsty pirate that then sailed the seas.'

'How terrible!' I cried. 'A pirate! I thought a vessel carrying troops would be certainly safe from such an attack.'

'Stay!' interrupted the colonel. 'I have not said that the ship was full of armed troops; though even in that case she might be unequal to the task of driving off a determined pirate. But the case I am speaking of was very different, and if you care to hear it, I will tell it to you.'

'I should like it very much,' I said; 'the attraction of a story of real life is too great to be resisted.'

'Very well,' said the old colonel; 'then you shall have it, whether worthy of your interest or not. You must know,' he continued, 'that when I joined the army—more than fifty years ago—I was gazetted to a regiment then quartered in the West Indies; and on making inquiries as to my passage, I was informed that a vessel would shortly sail for that station, and that some other officers, belonging to my own and other regiments, would take a passage in her. She was a barque of about seven hundred tons, called the *Alfred*, and I joined her at Gravesend. A smart, trim, little craft she was; and her captain prided himself on her appearance, and inspired his men with the same feeling. I found two or three young fellows going out like myself to join their regiments; a married major with his wife and child and his sister-in-law; and two other ladies going to join their husbands abroad. As usual, we were shorthanded enough as regards the crew, who barely numbered twenty all told.

'Just before I went down to join the ship, a terrible tale of outrage upon the high seas had occupied the minds of all in England, for the papers were full of the horrible story of the discovery of the *Morning Star*, and of the tragedy that was revealed when that unhappy vessel was boarded as a derelict. If I remember aright, they who were told off to board and examine the apparently deserted ship found, on entering the saloon, her ill-fated officers and passengers sitting back to back around the long table, closely lashed in pairs, each with his throat gashed from ear to ear! And there were fair and delicate girls among them too—none spared—not one! And the fiends who had done this deed had attempted to scuttle the ship, that she might sink, and carry all evidence of the awful crime down to the bottom of the sea, to join the sad list of vessels that are posted as "missing," none know how or where. But Providence willed it otherwise.

'Well, as I say, it was this story that was in the minds and mouths of us all as we gathered first around the table in the *Alfred's* saloon, and the weaker expressed strong apprehensions of a similar fate befalling us on our lonely voyage; and some who were strong of heart tried to



laugh down the notion; and others even made as if they would desire such a meeting, that they might wreak vengeance upon such demons. Our good little captain said nothing, or at anyrate but little; but, as we afterwards found, he made every inquiry that was possible as to the appearance, size, armament, and habitat of the pirate-ship to which this deed was ascribed. Then we sailed; and for the first time I experienced the delicious pleasure of sweeping down Channel with a fresh and fair wind, the English coast spreading out before us from the Foreland to the Start, as we rushed along hour after hour, bright sun overhead, tight little ship underfoot, young blood in my veins, and all the world before me. What wonder, then, that ere we were clear of the Channel, the ghastly mystery of the *Morning Star* was pretty nearly erased from my memory, crowded out by the thousand new sensations consequent upon this new departure in my life.

"All went well with us; no hurricane came down to drive us struggling in the wild whirl of waters; the wind was not always fair, nor the sky always bright, but the monotony of the voyage was disturbed by no menace of disaster. At last a day came when our little captain at breakfast announced to us that if the wind held fair and strong, we might hope to reach our destination in another forty-eight hours; and to us, more than satisfied as we were with our experience of the sea, weary of being cooped up in so small a vessel, and full of eager desire to see the wonders of the foreign land, the announcement was delightful; and often and anxiously did we pop up from below and cast a glance around to see if the wind still held fair. On one of these occasions, when I had for the twentieth time in the last hour put my head up the hatchway to see if all was well, I noticed the skipper standing aft with his glass to his eye looking long and hard at some distant object; and following the direction of his telescope, I saw a speck which could be nothing else but a ship.

"Hillo! captain," said I, "a stranger in sight?"

"Yes," said he quietly; "she is coming up with us fast. She must be bringing up a breeze with her, or we are running out of the wind, which she still holds. A short time ago, we could only see her topsails, and now her hull is rising. Take a look at her," as he handed the glass to me.

"I looked. She seemed a small brig or brigantine, with very square yards, and she was, as he said, overhauling us fast; but other than that I could not tell.

"The wind is falling fast," said our skipper; "I am afraid it will end in a dead calm."

"I did not answer; I merely rushed down below with the eagerness of youth. 'I say, a sail! you fellows—that looks like nearing land, eh?—Miss Dash! a sail! You'll see it right aft; the captain thinks the wind is falling;' and away I rushed on deck again to inspect anew the interesting stranger.

"I was surprised not to see the skipper anywhere about the deck; but following the eye of the man at the wheel, I looked aloft, and saw him settling himself down in the

crossrees and levelling his glass once more. He, too, was interested in her, that was evident. Presently he closed his glass, came down from aloft, and said to the first-mate: "Mr Brown, stunsails!"

"How glad we were! We loved to see the stunsails set, and to feel that the little ship was doing her best to bring her long voyage to an end, and our captain was evidently anxious to be in port. The extra canvas pulled her along considerably faster than she had gone before; but it was evident that the breeze was fading away both with us and with the stranger, for the glass showed that she too had set stunsails. As the evening came down, the wind fell to almost nothing, and in its place an exceedingly heavy ground-swell got up, on which our little ship rolled and squattered in a most restless and uncomfortable manner.

"As it was impossible to remain comfortably on deck, the ship rolled so incessantly and wildly, I went below, turned in, and tried hard to sleep, but the motion of the ship made it almost impossible. Again and again I woke through the hot night, and in the occasional intervals of noise, fancied I heard the skipper's voice giving orders on deck, but this I supposed was merely imagination. At last, at about five A.M. I could stand it no longer—my bunk was intolerable; and, tossing on my clothes, I scrambled as best I could up the ladder and staggered cautiously aft.

"Good-morning, captain. 'Not a breath of wind, eh? and she is rolling worse than ever, I think.—Ah, there's our friend!'" I added, as I looked in the direction of the strange vessel. "Seems nearer than last night, after all. What do you make of her?"

"I don't like the look of her at all," said he, very gravely and in a low voice. "I don't wish to alarm you unnecessarily, but I never saw a craft of more suspicious appearance. She is showing no colours, though ours were hoisted at daylight; she carries a great number of guns for a vessel employed in trade; she has a perfect swarm of men on board; and what is more," added he, sinking his voice so that not even the man at the wheel could hear him, "she is terribly like the description of the craft which is supposed to have taken the *Morning Star*!"

"For an instant my blood seemed to rush back to my heart and congeal there; but I mastered my excitement and concealed it as best I might.

"What can we do?" said I in a low voice.

"Not much, I fear," returned he calmly. "We have two guns, carronades, but a very small supply of shot and powder, and if it came to fighting in that way, he could lie off and sink us at his leisure. But he won't do that; that is not his business—he must *take* first, and *sink* afterwards; and if it comes to boarding—God help us!—Say nothing about it down below to the ladies," he added. "They will know it, if it is true, far too soon as it is; but you might give a hint to your brother-officers."

"With a heavy heart, I made my way to the hatchway to whisper dismay and terror to my friends below. What a terrible breakfast that was! To sit with the ghastly secret weighing down my heart like lead, and hear the gay chatter of the ladies as they anticipated a speedy arrival,

laid out their plans for the future, and rallied me and the other men on our want of spirits. We tried after breakfast, by various excuses, to keep them down below; but they laughed us aside; and gaily scrambled up the hatchway to renew their acquaintance with the stranger, full of eager hope that she might be within speaking distance. How they laughed to see her roll till her copper showed bright and radiant half-way to her keel; how they plied the skipper with questions about her; ventured to imagine that she might have friends of theirs on board, and finally waved handkerchiefs to her in their guilelessness!

'At last the captain made some excuse for requesting the ladies to retire below, and having succeeded in his object, took us all into his counsel and laid the matter before us.

"If, as I have every reason to fear, gentlemen," said he, "the craft astern of us is a pirate, we must face the fact and try and make some plan of escape. At present, I believe we are safe from him as long as this calm and this tremendous ground-swell last. He cannot come any nearer, there being no wind; he cannot hoist out his boats and tow up to us in so heavy a roll. My idea is, that he will wait for the roll to go down and the breeze to spring up, and then take us at his ease, knowing that we cannot escape now. But there are one or two things in our favour: he cannot have been waiting for us, for our cargo would be worthless to him. He has probably fallen across us by accident, and he will want to know what we are before he attacks us. Vessels of his trade have occasionally caught a tartar, and they learn to be wary. If he thinks we are worth taking, he will not, as he might, stand off and play at long-bowls, because that would result in the probable sinking of the ship and loss of her cargo. On the other hand, he will be very wary of boarding, should he anticipate a determined resistance from a large number of armed men; and in that case, the best thing we can do, as it seems to me, is to let him believe that we have troops on board, and that any attempt on his part to board will meet with a warm reception. What do you think, gentlemen?"

'The captain was undoubtedly correct in his reasoning, and his opinion was at once acted upon. All of us who held a commission in the army put on our uniforms and appeared in them on the upper deck; while some of the hands forward were rigged up in mess-jackets, &c., supplied by the officers for the purpose, and were instructed to show themselves at intervals on the fore-castle, multiplying themselves as much as possible; while a soldier-servant of the major's was ordered to do sentry-go with a musket aft. Moreover, our two twenty-four pounder carronades were loaded each with a round-shot and a large bag of musket-bullets; muskets—for we had a few—were served out to the men, with a cutlass apiece; and we who had swords and sporting-guns and pistols made them ready for use.

'But all this preparing of arms and unpacking of uniforms could not be done without the knowledge of the ladies of our party; and the apprehensions of the major's wife were first aroused, and gradually spread in terrified whispers to the whole of the party, until at last it was necessary

to take them partially into our confidence and let them know that there was danger.

'As night fell, we fancied that the swell was somewhat less in bulk, but it might be only fancy; anyhow, the captain would not hear of us all keeping watch all night, which was what we youngsters especially proposed to do. "No, gentlemen," said he. "Go and turn in, and get what rest you can while you have the chance."

'I went below, and turned in at his bidding, and wearied with excitement and watching, I fell asleep, a troubled, unsatisfactory sleep, it is true, but not the less sleep; and from this troubled rest I was aroused by hearing my name whispered and feeling a gentle touch upon my arm. I started up, and saw by the dim light of a lantern the figure of our old quartermaster. "Beg pardon, sir," said he; "but the cap'n sent me down to say the brigantine is on the move, and he'd like you to know."

'I jumped up, seized my arms, and hurried on deck. It was about two in the morning; the swell had gone down considerably, though still very great; the stars were all over the sky. The captain silently pointed in the direction of the brigantine. I looked, but at first could see nothing; then she rose upon the swell, and I saw her clearly. She was much nearer!

"But how—how?" I asked. "There is still no wind, and"—

'The captain grasped my arm, to make me silent, and whispered: "Sweeps! Listen!"

'Intently I listened, and for some seconds without result; but, the ship pausing for one moment in her tumbling roll, and allowing a momentary cessation to her creaks and groans, I heard faintly and mistily, as if in a dream, the smothered cheep of the sweeps (long oars) as the unknown vessel strove to work herself forward by this means.

"What can they do?" I whispered.

"Nothing yet, while this roll lasts, except come closer up and make a nearer inspection of us. When the day dawns, we must change our tactics," replied the captain. "Go down again; there is nothing you can do."

'But I was wrought up to too high a pitch to go down again; and the captain and I remained up all the rest of the night until daylight dawned discussing the situation, and racking our brains for a method of escape.

'And now the sun sprang up and glorified the tumbling ocean, whose troubled bosom was certainly heaving with far less vehemence than before; and there, not half a mile away from us, on our larboard quarter, lay the brigantine, still rolling heavily as we ourselves did, her row of guns, eight on a side, gleaming brightly in the morning sun; her bulwarks thickly lined with heads; and at her gaff, admitting of no doubt any longer as to her character—a coal-black flag! We could see that we were the object of eager examination by her crew; and for their benefit we enacted a little pantomime, which the captain and I had planned the night before. No uniforms were now to be seen upon the deck; but, as we knew that their glasses were upon us, intent on discovering our force, those in uniform were instructed to appear occasionally at the hatchways both fore and aft, as if about to come on deck, with their arms in their hands, when they

would at once be peremptorily ordered below by one of the mates—giving those in the brigantine the idea that we were full of troops.

'As the morning passed, it was evident that the brigantine's people were puzzled, and hardly knew whether to leave us alone or not. All that day and all that night we lay about half a mile apart, courtesying to each other as we rose and fell on the swell, with no incident to cause us fresh apprehension, save that at night they again got their sweeps out, and actually swept her right round us, in order, I suppose, to keep us in a state of panic and anxiety.

'Again the day dawned, again the blaze of sunlight streamed over the waters. What is it that is making such a stir in the swarm on board the brigantine? Why are they getting out their sweeps again in such haste? Are they going at last to attack us? Are they?—But no! their stern is towards us. They are moving in the opposite direction! Is help coming to us? Are they moving off in fear? Our captain rushed up into the maintop with his glass, and even before he had reached that height, the shout of "A sail!" came from his lips, and his finger pointed over our larboard quarter. Eagerly we strained our eyes in that direction, and far away, hull down beneath the horizon, in the very quarter to which the brigantine was steering, we saw the gleam of white which betokened the presence of a large vessel under sail.

"A large merchantman, homeward-bound, I should say," the captain shouted from the top. "That villain must have been waiting for her when he fell in with us. Let us hope she will get away from him. She seems to have a breeze, at anyrate."

'What a relief it was to see that swarm of miscreants moving off by their own exertions! How we followed them with our eyes and glasses as hour after hour their sweeps rose and fell upon the now subsiding surface of the sea! By-and-by, her sails seemed to fill, she heeled slightly to one side; her sweeps were no longer to be seen—she had a breeze.

'Shortly after this, an exclamation from our skipper attracted my attention. "I thought so," he said; "there are two of them!" and as we looked, just clear of the merchantman on the other side we saw a suspicious-looking schooner. The brigantine at once hoisted a signal and fired a gun, as we could see by the white smoke; and then the two evidently converged upon the great merchantman. She, too, saw them, that was evident, for she piled up canvas upon canvas, to woo the too sluggish breeze. Now the foe were nearing her, and all disguise was evidently thrown aside, for puff after puff of white smoke darted from their sides, responded to, we were glad to see, by puffs at longer intervals from hers; and faintly on the nearing breeze we caught the sound of the explosions. But closer still and closer crept the foe, and every eye was strained upon the desperate fight, and all minds intent on that alone, when "All hands make sail!" shouted the captain; "here is the breeze right on top of us!" and sure enough there it was, coming down crisp and fresh almost before we were ready for it. Quickly our good fellows covered the good ship with a cloud of canvas; and as she felt the gentle power of the young breeze and heeled over

to it, and the bubbles began swiftly to course astern, a terrible load fell from our hearts, and we felt that we were saved.'

The colonel paused a moment, his eye fixed on vacancy, as if he saw himself once more upon the deck of the *Alfred*.

'And what became of the merchantman?' I asked, when silence had lasted for some moments.

'Don't ask me—don't ask me!' he replied in agitated tones. 'Poor souls! murdered—every one of them—and the ship scuttled.'

'And was no vengeance exacted for so terrible a crime?'

'Before an hour had passed after our arrival, a thirty-six gun frigate had sailed on our information to capture or destroy those miserable villains wheresoever they might find them; but vessels such as those may go where no great warship can follow them, and the intricate passages and keys of the West Indies were better known to such outcasts of land and sea than to His Majesty's officers.'

'And they escaped?'

'Within a month from the time of our encounter, those vessels were caught in a furious West Indian tornado; were dismasted, and, after tossing about for days at the mercy of the storm, were wrecked on one of the islands, where most of their crew miserably perished in their efforts to swim through the surf. Their leader, however, and one or two more, managed to reach the shore alive, where the natives had come down to render what help they could; but, being immediately recognised, they were seized and hanged without mercy on the nearest tree.—There, madam! that is one of the experiences of a subaltern in the old days, and you will agree with me in thinking it by no means a pleasant one.'

'I do indeed,' replied I. 'But did you ever hear the name of the man who commanded those two vessels?'

'His name! Yes, of course. I used to know his name well enough once; but my memory is getting weak.—What on earth now was that scoundrel's name! Gossett? Gaston? Gaspard?—Yes, that's it! I think his name was Gaspard, as far as I can recollect; but I won't be certain. Gaspard! yes; that's the name, I believe.'

## THE MONTH:

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ASTRONOMICAL and meteorological students are offered by Mr Warner of Rochester, New York State, U.S.A., two prizes of two hundred dollars each, to be competed for during the present year. The first is for the discovery of a new comet; and the second is for the best essay upon the Origin of the Gorgeous Sunsets which have been witnessed during the past eighteen months in various parts of the world, and which have been attributed by many to volcanic particles suspended in the higher regions of the atmosphere. Competitors for the first prize must communicate their discovery by telegram to Dr Swift, Director of the Warner Observatory, Rochester, before taking any one else into their confidence. The essays must also be sent to the same gentleman

not later than December 1. Each communication must have a distinguishing motto, and must be accompanied by a sealed envelope, also bearing that motto, and containing within it the name of the author.

A good imitation of celluloid may, according to a continental journal, be made from potato pulp. The mode of preparation is simple. Potatoes after being peeled are boiled for several hours in water containing eight per cent. of sulphuric acid. The resulting pasty mass is then deprived of its adherent moisture by pressure, and is afterwards moulded into any required form. It is said that good billiard balls can be made of this substance, and that pipe-bowls manufactured from it are difficult to distinguish from meerschaum.

Some years ago a story was current of a woman who applied at one of our hospitals for treatment of a nervous affection. After listening to a recital of her symptoms, the doctor made her shut her lips upon a clinical thermometer. Upon removing it, the patient exclaimed: 'Why, I declare it has done me good already.' The doctor humoured her delusion, and refrained from any other treatment than a few more applications of the magical glass tube. She was soon cured. A parallel case is now cited by the *Philadelphia Medical News*, an hysterical patient having been cured by magnetism. The magnet was of wood! but capped with metal, so as to seem cold to the touch. These cases remind us that a large proportion of such ailments are imaginary, and will often yield to imaginary remedies.

A new brown gunpowder, called Cocoa Powder, has been tested by our military authorities. Its great recommendation is that when fired it gives little or no smoke. This would seem an apparently unimportant detail of field-service. But when we call to mind the incidents of General Graham's victory at Tamasi—in the Soudan—last year, we shall be able to note its real importance. Upon that occasion, our men in their excitement fired their weapons prematurely, enveloping themselves in a veil of smoke, under cover of which the fearless Arabs broke the British square, and for a brief time were masters of the situation. This is but one instance out of many which might be adduced to show the inconvenience of smoke on the battlefield.

The work of widening the Suez Canal, which is now definitely decided upon, will, it is estimated, occupy two years; but the benefit of the alterations will make itself felt before their completion. The enlarged waterway will be capable of an almost indefinite amount of traffic, and this result may be said to be necessary; for calculation shows that the traffic has in the past doubled itself in five years; and there is every reason to believe that this rate of increase will continue in the future.

Some interesting particulars relating to the amount of colonial possessions possessed by different states have lately been published. Britain heads the list with sixty-five square miles of colony to each mile of her own area. Then follow—Holland, with fifty-four miles; Portugal, with twenty; Denmark, with six; and France, with not quite two miles of colonial land to each mile of mother-country. It is calculated

that the lands over which Britain holds sway exceed the great Russian empire by two hundred thousand square miles, and that they represent as nearly as possible one-sixth of the land area of the globe.

It has lately become quite a common occurrence to find rough pictorial illustrations inserted in daily and weekly newspapers which have heretofore depended upon the attractions of letterpress alone. It is not perhaps generally known that these cuts are produced automatically, without the help of the engraver in any stage of the process. There are now several different methods by which these interesting results can be achieved, most of them depending more or less upon photography. It has been arranged to hold an international competition of these automatic-engraving processes, and the specimens sent in will eventually form a part of the Exhibition at South Kensington. Full particulars can be obtained of Mr J. S. Hodson, the hon. secretary, at 20 High Holborn, London.

Our contemporary *Land and Water* has lately done a useful service in pointing out the fallacy of the widespread belief that ivy trained against the walls of a dwelling-house is productive of damp walls and general unhealthiness. The very opposite of this is really the case. If any one will carefully examine an ivy-clad wall after a shower of rain, he will notice that while the overlapping leaves have conducted the water from point to point until it has reached the ground, the wall beneath is perfectly dry and dusty. More than this, the thirsty shoots which force their way into every crevice of the structure which will afford a firm hold, act like suckers, in drawing out any particles of moisture for their own nourishment. The ivy, in fact, acts like a greatcoat, keeping the house from wet, and warm into the bargain. One more virtue it has, in giving to the ugliest structure an evergreen beauty.

The Cremation Society of England have issued circulars to the effect that they are now in a position to undertake the cremation of bodies at Woking in Surrey. The chief practical objection to this new-old method of disposing of the dead is that all traces of poison feloniously administered would be destroyed. This is sought to be guarded against by the rule of the Society, that two medical certificates as to the cause of death must be produced before they can consent to act. The cost of cremation is, as at present fixed, under twelve pounds sterling, which will compare favourably with the sums often paid for ordinary and, as a rule, needlessly expensive sepulture.

Several very efficient electric gas-lighters have for some time past been before the public. In one of these, a button is pressed, which sets in motion a vulcanite arrangement, thereby exciting frictional electricity, and causing a train of sparks to appear at the top of the instrument. These sparks will readily fire the gas. Another contrivance contains within it a bar of zinc and one of carbon together with an exciting fluid, which is only brought into contact with them when the instrument is inverted. Directly this occurs, a thin platinum wire becomes red hot, and the gas can be lighted. A modification of this latter arrangement is for



the purpose of detecting gas-escapes without the usual catastrophe. It consists of a similar platinum wire inclosed within a safety envelope of wire-gauze. When brought into a gaseous atmosphere, the temperature of the platinum is much increased, and a warning bell is set ringing.

Some experiments in ocean telegraphy are about to be tried in the Mediterranean, which, if successful, will have important and far-reaching applications. It has been suggested by a French officer of engineers that deep-sea cables could be furnished at certain intervals with branch lines leading to the surface of the water, and that these lines could be buoyed in such a manner that passing vessels could attach to them the necessary appliances for communicating with the shores. The present experiments are to be tried upon the cable between France and Algiers; but a more important field for the system would be on the broad Atlantic, where not only could ships send news of their own safety and of the well-being of ships they had spoken with, but storm warnings of the greatest value for weather forecasting could also be sent home. The result of the Mediterranean experiments will be looked for with great interest.

This year will see the completion of one of the greatest submarine engineering feats ever undertaken in Britain. The Severn tunnel was first begun by the Great Western Railway sixteen years ago, and the accomplishment of the great work has been delayed by difficulties which a few years back would have been thought insurmountable. Twice has an enormous volume of water flooded the works, through the accidental tapping of land springs; besides which, fissures in the rock were met with which let the tidal waters into the tunnel. The river is two and a quarter miles broad at the site of the works, but the tunnel itself is nearly double that length, in order to allow for the necessary gradient on either side, the crown of the tunnel being fifty feet below the deepest part of the river. The enterprise has cost considerably more than a million of money.

The stupendous task of printing the entire catalogue of books in the British Museum Library, numbering one million three hundred and fifty thousand printed books and fifty thousand manuscripts, has for some time been steadily progressing. The system in vogue up to a recent period was to write the names of the books with their reference numbers, &c., upon slips of paper, which were afterwards pasted into the catalogue volumes in alphabetical order. From two such volumes, which sufficed to describe the collection in 1787, the number had swelled to two thousand volumes in 1878. The number of printed volumes now amounts to seventy-four, and the importance of the reform will be recognised when we state that these seventy-four new volumes replace no fewer than two hundred and seventy-six of the far more cumbersome manuscript volumes. It may not be generally known that any subscriber of three pounds ten shillings annually can obtain copies of these catalogue volumes as they are issued, the present rate of issue being thirty each year. The government grant for this truly national work is only three thousand pounds per annum, and we are inclined to think that the most captious parliamentary critic would not raise an objection if this sum were considerably increased.

Those who have a desire to become students of geology, but who think that they are deterred from practical work by living in great cities with few opportunities of getting outside the region of bricks and mortar, would do well to pay attention to a lecture upon the Geology of the Metropolitan Streets, lately delivered by Mr Skerchly, F.G.S., at the London Institution. In speaking of the building-stones of the great city, he showed how formerly they were confined to easily worked limestones and sandstones. But of late years a great and welcome change has occurred, for architects have availed themselves of crystalline rocks—the many-coloured granites—and heretofore-plainness is gradually giving place to artistic erections. The student of geology may therefore now find many examples of interesting and picturesque rock-building material, whereas formerly, London and Waterloo bridges were the only examples of them to be found within the metropolitan area. The lecture was well illustrated both with large specimens and sections of rock, the structure of which was shown by means of the microscope.

According to all accounts, the roller-pulp machine invented by a Mr Pond is capable of very marvellous results. It will turn sawdust, shavings, chips, and any fragments of wood into all descriptions of paper, and this without the admixture of rags. It will also render available the stalks of sugar-cane, cotton, hemp, and other plants at the rate of two to three tons per day. A Vermont newspaper is entirely printed on paper made from sawdust treated by this machine, its tensile strength being such that it will stand a test of seventeen pounds to the square inch. Besides paper-manufacture, the wood-pulp can be moulded papier-mâché fashion into pails, barrels, and many other utensils. Even for railway carriage-wheels, prepared wood-pulp has been found serviceable; and if so, why should not the experiment be made of testing its efficacy for the rails themselves? Wooden sleepers, closely placed, have latterly enhanced the pleasure of a railway journey. The ease of transit, and possibly the safety, may by-and-by be secured by hardened pulp. The woods best adapted to the process are those of soft quality, such as fir, pine, poplar, &c.

'Australian System of reducing Iron Ores' is the title under which a process has been patented by Mr W. H. Harrison of Sydney, for dealing with the valuable native ores of New South Wales. Numerous attempts have been already made to manufacture iron and steel from them; but these have failed, it is said, because the experimenters have adhered too rigidly to British modes of working, without considering certain peculiarities in the Australian ores, which require special modes of treatment. Mr Harrison separates the impurities which form the chief difficulty by means of hydrogen, which carries off these impurities in a gaseous condition, leaving the pure metal behind. It has been said that this new process is likely to do for our Australian colonies what the Bessemer process has done for the mother-country. Whether this is an exaggeration or not will ere long be ascertained, for works on a large scale will presently be complete for working the process. If it be successful, the saving to the colony in the import of English ores will amount to a vast sum annually.

It seems astonishing that in these days of luxurious railway carriages, the comforts of which have been extended to the third-class passengers, a better system of heating than the cumbersome and uncomfortable foot-warmers has not invariably been introduced on the British lines. In Sweden, the waste steam is utilised—at very trifling expense and by simple appliances—to secure an equable heat in the coaches; but for some unknown reason, the railway directors in this country as a rule prefer the antiquated system of scorching the feet and leaving the rest of the body uncared for. Splendid speed is attained by our locomotives, which, for instance, bring London and Edinburgh within nine hours of each other. Why not utilise the engine's heating as well as her break-powers?

A paper lately read before the Society of Chemical Industry by Mr Redwood gave many interesting particulars of the Russian petroleum wells. Although it has been estimated that the area of oil-producing territory in Russia measures fourteen thousand square miles, the field at Baku is the only one worked, and this covers a space of three and a half square miles only. Its enormous output is said to be sufficient for the requirements of the whole world. Mr Redwood happened to be present when one of the wells was opened. He tells us that a mighty column of oil spouted up to the height of one hundred feet, carrying big stones with it, and that it continued gushing out until a huge lake of petroleum was formed. The product is refined on the spot by a process of distillation, the residue being used as fuel both for steamers on the Caspian and upon many of the Russian railways. The by-products of the distillation, such as naphthaline, benzole, &c., meet with some attention; but that branch of the manufacture is at present in its infancy. The oil-wells of America have always been considered remarkably productive, but they are certainly rivalled by those at Baku.

The Indian Rhea plant possesses such a tenacious fibre, that it was long ago pointed out that it would be of great value for various manufacturing purposes; but a difficulty stood in the way, because of there being no machine known by which the grower could produce from it a clean and unbroken fibre fit for market. Thereupon, as we formerly informed our readers, the Indian government offered a valuable prize to the inventor of the coveted machine. At the recent Calcutta Exhibition, nine machines were shown of more or less merit, but only one fulfilled all the conditions laid down by the authorities. This is called the Universal Fibre Cleaning Machine, and its main feature consists of an iron drum upon which several metal beaters are bolted. As it revolves, a jet of water releases the refuse loosened by the beaters, and also softens the gummy matter by which the fibres are bound together. The cost of the machine is small, and it can be driven by steam or by bullocks. It is anticipated that this invention will open up a new source of textile industry, and will be especially valuable in certain districts of India where the Rhea plant grows wild, and has been hitherto looked upon as cumbering the ground.

Visitors to the Health Exhibition last year may remember that there was to be found there an

Anthropological Laboratory, where, on payment of a small fee, any person could be measured, weighed, have his sight tested, his strength of pull recorded, his lung capacity measured, &c. The results in each case were tabulated upon a card and handed to the visitor. This laboratory was organised by Mr Frances Galton, who has done much other original work in the study of his fellow-beings. He has lately published the general results attained at this unique laboratory, and they are both curious and instructive. We learn, for instance, that the breathing capacity of men is much greater than of women. The average height of the two sexes was five feet eight inches and five feet three inches respectively. In keenness of sight, the ladies, we are not surprised to hear, were about equal to the sterner sex. We are disposed to think, in looking at these figures, that the average is placed too high, and for this reason: persons of good build and great strength would feel a natural pride in seeing their personal advantages recorded. But at the same time, undergrown, weakly men and women would shrink from exhibiting their shortcomings. In this way, may not Mr Galton have had the flowers of the flock from which to draw his conclusions?

Two famous aeronauts and engineers have lately died in France. The one was M. Giffard, the constructor of the famous captive balloon of 1878, the largest and most powerful aërostat ever made. He is, however, better known as the inventor of the famous steam-injector, which is now used all the world over for filling the boilers of engines with water. The other was M. Dupuy de Lôme, the engineer of the first French iron-clad, *La Gloire*. He was the prime mover of the balloon mail-service which was established in Paris at the time of the memorable siege.

In the Report for 1884 of the Council of the National Smoke Abatement Institution, many proofs are given that the labours of the Society have met with some success. Gas stoves let out by the gas Companies to private consumers have in many cases taken the place of coal-fires. Large quantities of bread are now baked in various districts without any smoke being produced. It appears that the recommendations in various quarters to use slow combustion stoves to reduce smoke from open grates have been made on erroneous data. The Council plead for an extension of the Metropolitan Smoke Act beyond its present boundaries, and also recommend a more stringent application of its provisions, now that in various trades the suppression of the smoke nuisance is merely a matter of care. We may state in this connection that it has been calculated, from the extra consumption of gas necessarily involved, that a single foggy day costs the consumers ten thousand pounds, to say nothing of its effect upon human life.

The Trawling Commissioners have presented their Report to the Home Secretary, and it is now issued in the form of a White-book, extending to over forty pages. It deals with the subject in a most exhaustive manner, as the following summary (for which we are indebted to the *Scotsman*) will show: The Commissioners find that in territorial waters from the Moray Firth to Grimsby there has been a falling-off of flat fish, and a decrease of haddocks in certain places;

that in offshore waters there has been no decrease in the total takes of fish in the North Sea, except in the case of soles; that the beam-trawl is not destructive to cod and haddock spawn, and there is no proof of injury to the spawn of herrings or other edible fish; that there is no wasteful or unnecessary destruction of immature food-fishes by the beam-trawl; that the number of fish on particular grounds, especially in narrow waters, may be sensibly diminished by the use of the beam-trawl; that the injury done by the beam-trawl to the food of fish is insignificant; that it has not been proved that the use of the beam-trawl is the sole cause of the diminution of fish in territorial waters; that in the absence of a proper system of fishery statistics and scientific observations, it was impossible to discover the causes of or measure the fluctuations of the fisheries; that much damage has been done to drift-nets and haddock lines, particularly by steam-trawlers; and that peculiar difficulties attend the recovery by fishermen of compensation under the Sea Fisheries Act, or of civil damages. The Commissioners make various recommendations suggested by the conclusions arrived at.

The question of the raising of the temperature of buildings lighted by gas or electricity has been cleverly determined at the Royal Theatre, Munich. It had been arranged that, before the commencement of the performance, the curtain should be raised and all the lamps should be allowed to burn for an hour. At the end of that time, observations on the temperature were taken at intervals of five minutes, simultaneously in the boxes, pit, and gallery. Again, the same observations were continued every ten minutes, after the audience had assembled and throughout the performance. By these experiments it was proved that the electric light—unlike its rival, gas—actually *diminished* the temperature, instead of adding to it. Instead of helping in the generation of carbonic acid gas, and thereby increasing the discomfort of public buildings, especially when filled by a large audience, the reverse appears to be the case; which, if really the case, must ultimately prove of immense advantage in theatres, music-rooms, churches, or other large structures; and this—to say nothing of the enormous superiority of the electric light—would alone give it a place as the most brilliant light in the world.

The great south window in Westminster Hall, which was seriously damaged by dynamite explosion on the 24th of February, was executed between the years 1847 and 1851, and opened the year of the first Great Exhibition. The artists were Messrs John Hardman & Co., and the subjects represented are the arms of all the kings and queens, and founders of reigning houses of England, from some time before the Conquest downwards. The drawings, which were prepared by Messrs Hardman nearly forty years ago with infinite care and labour, are all fortunately preserved, and will be employed by those gentlemen in the restoration of the portions of the window broken by the explosion, this work having been entrusted to that firm by the First Commissioner of Works. The panels of glass, which were much torn and twisted by the violence of the dynamite, are

nearly one hundred in number, and the damage otherwise was considerable.—A scientific contemporary has the following very interesting remarks on the curious effect of the action of the dynamite: 'The window in its present damaged state exhibits a remarkable and interesting evidence of the power of *suction* peculiar to dynamite in explosion. The panels of leaded glass, which are much distorted by the force of the explosion, are nearly without exception bulged *inwards*; whilst the plain diamond-shaped glazing, which formed an outer guard or protection to the stained glass, is bulged *outwards* at every point; but the inner window bears unmistakable evidence of a sudden and violent contraction of air immediately subsequent to the first expansion recorded by the state of the outer glass. It would seem that the same force would account for the fact of the two constables and Mr Green being found drawn into the hole which the explosion itself had made.'

## CURIOUS ANTIPATHIES IN ANIMALS.

### CATS.

I HAVE always been very fond of cats, and like all our family we have been in the habit of making great pets of them. They are not, I think, as a general rule, troubled with special or peculiar antipathies, but it is certain that they are endowed with far more intelligence, sagacity, and affection, than most people give them credit for. My experience and observation, extending over many years, convince me that where cats are well treated, petted, and rightly understood, they are capable of great affection for persons individually, and not merely for places, as it is so much the fashion to allege. Many people have a great dislike to the whole race, speak ill of them, and attribute to them every bad and worthless trait. This I consider a great injustice to one of the most beautiful, graceful, and, when properly treated, affectionate of our household pets.

A beautiful and touching anecdote of personal affection in a cat for her playmate, a child, was related recently in the *Leisure Hour*, where the cat not only refused food when the child died, but, like the celebrated Edinburgh dog, Greyfriars Bobby, passed most of her time in the village churchyard sitting by the grave, and returning home regularly for food. Was the faithful animal aware that the child was lying beneath? And did she expect her return to earth? It would seem that some such thought must have possessed her, and that she therefore resolved to await the child's reappearance.

A splendid tabby Tom belonged to my late father-in-law, and was a great pet of his daughter (my wife) when living at home before her marriage. Tab was very fond of his mistress, always selecting her lap, when possible, for his moments of repose. He was so well trained and intelligent that he would follow her about the garden or the adjoining fields, and answer to his name exactly like a dog; and yet, with all his affection, he would not allow my wife to sing, or even hum. When she sang, he would jump up, lash his tail—an unmistakable sign of anger—utter short sharp 'mews,' whilst every movement of the animal betrayed extreme uneasiness and annoyance. If the singing did not cease, the

mews would be extended into a sort of howl or cry, and he would stand on his hind-legs and pat the lady's knee with his paw, as a gentle remonstrance; sometimes he would fling himself down at full length, and scratch with his claws at the carpet in the oddest manner. These performances were most amusing. But one day, I am sorry to say, he lost both his patience and his temper, and behaved in a manner highly discreditable to a well-bred and intelligent feline. He was asleep in my wife's lap when she began, quite thoughtlessly, to hum a melody. In a moment Tab was sitting erect in her lap, glaring fiercely up into her face and uttering little angry cries. Rather amused than otherwise, my wife continued her humming, when Tab suddenly sprang up and stuck his claws into both sides of her face, below each ear. Seizing his paws and throwing him sharply down, my wife ceased the music, when—all being silent—Tab looked up, evidently rather surprised at his rough treatment, whisked his tail about, and then, seeming to think better of it, instantly jumped into her lap again, and commenced purring a loud song—let us hope—repentance for his bad conduct.

This is another and equally mysterious instance of musical antipathy, exhibited towards the singing of one person only; for I never heard that Tab showed the least dislike to the singing of any one else, or took any notice of music in general, whether vocal or instrumental; and in this he resembled the previously related cases of the dog Wag and the horse Jenny,\* neither of which could endure the singing of one particular lady.

We possessed, at the old home in Surrey, when I was a lad, a remarkably fine white cat. From her great size and strength, Fairy was always supposed to be a 'Tom;' but she belonged to what in her case was undoubtedly the 'fair' sex. She was very sagacious and clever. She would sit up and beg, jump through the hands held high, and, what was perhaps most singular, she would keep up a conversation with you by regularly answering, with an odd sort of pretty little short mew, every time you spoke to her. Frequently, when sitting alone by the fire, with Fairy for a companion, she has afforded me great amusement by her conversational powers; and I confess I would often rather have passed an hour in her company than in that of many persons I have since known, who were chiefly remarkable either for the most overpowering capacity for talk, or else for none at all—a state of things equally boring and wearisome.

Fairy was celebrated for her great intelligence in many ways, as well as her strong affection for my mother, who always seemed to be her especial favourite. When she returned home, puss would come forward to welcome her, tail erect, and then turning, would walk before her into the house in the most stately manner, uttering some odd little mews, evidently expressing genuine pleasure. As soon as my mother sat down Fairy would settle herself in her lap, commence a loud song of satisfaction, and positively decline to be removed therefrom; for if she was put down, on one side, she would immediately jump up on the other with the most amusing perseverance.

But with all her affection and sagacity, Fairy

had a particular antipathy to whistling—not necessarily the whistling of a musical melody; but whistling of any sort, such as the calling of a dog, or otherwise. She had a great objection to a long, loud, sharp whistle; the longer and louder it was, the more annoyed and fidgety she would become. She would throw herself at full length on the carpet, then start up and look you full in the face, uttering the usual short mews or cries—evidently intended as a gentle hint or remonstrance against your whistling propensities. If the long sharp notes continued, she moved uneasily about the room, occasionally stopping short, looking straight at the whistler, and giving two or three little short mews, in the drollest manner possible, saying as plainly as an animal could: 'Why do you continue this stupid noise? Don't you see how very much it disturbs me? I wish you'd be quiet!'

One day I continued whistling loud and shrill notes, and poor Fairy got so annoyed, that after the usual exhibition of mewing and prostrations on the carpet, she suddenly jumped on my knee, and then standing on her hind-legs, repeatedly tapped my chin with her soft velvet paw. When I suddenly stopped, she looked intently into my face, gave a little jerky sort of mew, and then laid herself quietly down in my lap, satisfied, apparently, that I had stopped the peculiar sound which gave her so much annoyance.

#### 'IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.'

It might have been! Oh, saddest words of all.  
We dream and dream of scenes beyond recall.  
Sad thoughts will come, and burning tears will fall,  
For 'might have been.'

Oh, could we live our lives all o'er again!  
Could we forget the present, with the pain  
Of thoughts that are unspoken! All in vain.  
It might have been.

It might have been. Oh, words of wild regret;  
Sorrow for vanished hours, and yet—ah, yet—  
Would we, if e'en we could, forget—forget  
What might have been?

Ah, well! perchance for all some sweet hope lies  
Buried deeply, maybe, from human eyes,  
And none but God may ever hear our sighs  
O'er 'might have been.'

God knoweth best; and though our tears fast fall,  
Though none beside may know, He knoweth all,  
All that is sad and lost beyond recall—  
The 'might have been.'

KATIE M. LUCK.

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\* See Nos. 6 and 37 (1884) of this Journal.